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# Role of the teacher aide in the secondary school

Mildred Harpole

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THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER AIDE IN THE  
SECONDARY SCHOOL

by  
Mildred Harpole

A Paper Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree  
of Master of Arts in Education (Reading Specialist) at the Cardinal Stritch  
College

Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
1969

This research paper has been  
approved for the Graduate Committee  
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Date Dec. 1968

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## CHAPTER I

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

#### Introduction

In view of the large pupil per teacher ratio and the attending problems, it has become imperative for educators to analyze the auxiliary personnel available to improve the educational inequities and to supplement the current program with the most effective teacher aides.

Realizing the importance of person-to-person contact in education, and in an attempt to realize the educative goal of individualized instruction, a very small percentage of school systems experimented with the limited use of volunteer and paid teacher aides more than two decades ago.<sup>1</sup> However, the momentum of the current high level of interest in teacher aide programs began in the early 1960's.<sup>2</sup>

Today, all of the major cities of the United States have begun either a teacher aide program or have initiated the preliminary steps necessary to integrate a teacher aide program into their present school staff.

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<sup>1</sup> Research Division, "Teacher Aides in Public Schools," NEA Research Bulletin, XLV, No. 2 (May, 1967), 39.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



### Statement of the Problem

This research paper is primarily concerned with the teacher aide programs, as they now exist, with a view to laying the basis for a teacher aide program in a specific situation. Specific aspects will be:

- 1) Reporting and analyzing some of the current literature available concerning paid teacher aide programs in the secondary school.
- 2) Attempting to define the role of the teacher aide in a secondary school.
- 3) Examining the data concerning teacher aides in the secondary school reading programs as reported in response to questionnaires sent to the twenty cities with the highest population in the United States.

### Significance

Currently, the State of Wisconsin has allocated 2.7 million dollars to the City of Milwaukee to employ 1,000 teacher aides in heavily populated and culturally disadvantaged areas. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction indicated the significance of the problem in the following statement:

As with all educational innovations, questions about the effectiveness of this new idea are arising. Educators are

wondering to what extent teacher aides really do free the teacher's time to teach.<sup>3</sup>

Harold Howe, U. S. Commissioner of Education made the following statement:

There is a real power for schools in totally new patterns of using non-professional people. They are an enormous resource that we have not fully tapped.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, "Aides Aiding Teachers," Newsletter, XXI, No. 4 (January, 1968), 20.

<sup>4</sup>Howe, Harold, "Manpower Crisis: How 12 Districts Are Beating It," School Management, X (August, 1966), 47.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Introduction

The teacher aide program involves both volunteer and paid personnel. Most systems utilize volunteer personnel in some capacity throughout their entire system; however, the wise use of paid personnel has increased in the last five years.

The review of literature in this chapter is primarily concerned with paid teacher aides. It must be recognized, however, that much of the literature relates to both volunteer and paid auxiliary personnel. Many of the systems employed only paid personnel. Some of the systems utilized volunteer and paid personnel and a very small number of systems relied solely upon volunteer assistance.

During the school year, 1965-1966, in 217 school systems enrolling 12,000 pupils or more, 44,351 teacher aides were employed. In these 217 systems were 396,028 teachers and 10,181,182 pupils at all school levels. About three-fourths of the school systems used only paid aides, about one-fourth had both paid and volunteer aides, in their schools; only two systems, or less than one per cent of the total, used volunteer aides alone.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Research Division, "Teacher Aides in Public Schools," NEA Research Bulletin, XLV, No. 2 (May, 1967), 37.

### History

Auxiliary personnel in the schools is not a modern innovation. For many years, individual teachers and schools have encouraged parents and friends to assist the school staff as volunteers. The duties of these pioneering auxiliary personnel were non-instructional and very informally administered. Parents were the main contributors through Parent Teacher Association projects or school booster clubs.

Paid personnel were introduced in the low income areas where the funds were needed to supplement the family income. Many of the systems utilized both volunteers and paid auxiliary personnel.

It is from a small beginning about two decades ago that the use of volunteers and paid teacher aides has grown. A very small percentage of systems reported in the Education Research Service Survey using teacher aides before 1950. Aide programs in 36.4% of the 217 school systems reported were begun in the first five years of the 1960's.<sup>2</sup>

Today, the demand for auxiliary personnel is imperative. Although the teacher aide program has been in existence for many years, the wide use and present organized structure was not employed.

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<sup>2</sup>  
Ibid., 39.

### Definition of a Teacher Aide in the Secondary School

A secondary teacher aide is a mature leader who understands and communicates with the students he serves. He is articulate and intelligent with an ability to follow directions. Although the teacher aide may not have finished high school, he is able to read fluently, write legibly and exercise sound judgment. Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin defined a teacher aide as an--

assistant to teachers; a library aide, school recreation and other ancillary education personnel who are under the supervision of professional members of the school staff, but the term does not include persons who are primarily responsible for the instruction of pupils.<sup>3</sup>

Senator Nelson clearly defined the teacher aide's role as a supportive one. The teacher aide cannot replace the teacher; but offers the teacher the opportunity to be creative and explore the many avenues of educational instruction.

### Need

Today's population explosion and migration to urban industrial areas has caused a crisis in the classroom never experienced before. Traditional education has advocated individualized instruction in theory; but the goal has been inoperative in practice due to the numerous profes-

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<sup>3</sup>. ibid., 37.

sional and non-professional duties of the modern classroom teacher.

Although the following statement was made by the administrator of a parochial school, the statement is even more applicable in a public school situation:

Pupil-teacher ratio in most of our schools, and particularly in our Catholic schools, prevents even the most dedicated teacher from providing her students with the individual attention necessary to meet their learning and developmental needs. Though a teacher may possess the knowledge, skill, and instructional materials necessary to teach well; she cannot possibly reach each child in a class on his level and proceed at his particular pace with a ratio of one-to-fifty or even forty.<sup>4</sup>

Teachers, today, perform many non-professional tasks which infringe upon the needed opportunities for curriculum planning and educational advancement. Denmark listed twenty-three required duties performed by teachers which has caused today's teaching to become "virtually unmanageable". The following ten items were taken from the twenty-three items listed:

1. Remain alert to significant developments in the academic specialty and continue general education in order to avoid obsolescence of knowledge.
2. Be a continuing student of the educative process and keep current with respect to innovations in teaching methods and materials.

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<sup>4</sup>Boudreau, Phyllis, C.N.D., "Teacher-Aides," The National Catholic Educational Association Bulletin, Vol. LXIV (August, 1967), 148-149.

3. Plan with students and fellow teachers.
4. Work with curriculum committees.
5. Experiment with different content, methods and materials and keep systematic records of such studies.
6. Read and evaluate students' work.
7. Confer with students and parents regarding pupil progress.
8. Counsel and advise students on academic, vocational, and personal concerns.
9. Develop reading lists, outlines, study guides, drill sheets, and visual material.
10. Prepare lists appropriate to the range of objectives, etc.<sup>5</sup>

The teacher is a skilled professional and as such must be permitted to do a professional level of work.

The needs of society require significant changes in our present school organization. Teachers need time to reflect and more opportunities for professional growth.<sup>6</sup>

The vast and varied list of duties required of teachers as outlined by Denmark seem to support the above statement expressing a needed time for teachers' professional growth.

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<sup>5</sup>Denemark, George W., "The Teacher and His Staff," NEA Journal LV, No. 9 (December, 1966), 17.

<sup>6</sup>Bank Street College of Education, "Auxiliary School Personnel: Their Roles, Training and Institutionalization," National Elementary Principal, XLVI, No. 6 (May, 1967), 7.

Several factors have contributed to the current upsurge in teacher aide programs. There has been a shortage of teaching personnel in all the major urban areas. The community has demanded a more complex role from its schools and there has been a resource of federal funds for initiating teacher aide programs. Educators have become acutely aware of the need to add supplementary personnel; in order to approximate the goal for individualized instruction. Modern teacher aide programs are relatively new and, as such, "there is apprehension and uncertainty; they are the people; however, who can most help teachers do a better job."<sup>7</sup>

### Characteristics

Teacher aide characteristics are as broad as the systems which employ them; however, there are certain characteristics which seem to be universally required. In describing the necessary characteristics of the auxiliary personnel, it becomes imperative to examine the total educational environment and identify those characteristics which will greatly enhance the total program. Generally, a teacher aide should be understanding, reliable, congenial, resourceful, creative, and mature. A teacher aide must be able to follow directions and to utilize sound judgement.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>8</sup> Boudreau, 148.



### Duties

Teacher aide duties can be divided into two categories: (1) instructional or paraprofessional, (2) non-instructional. Instructional duties involve direct classroom contacts and require some college training in ninety per cent of the school systems. The duties range from small group or one-to-one tutoring to research, classroom attendance, grade scoring, instructional media management and parent-teacher liaison.<sup>9</sup> The NEA has stated --

being an aide may become a regular part of preparing teachers to teach; besides giving students experience in the classroom, such training would help them to learn how, later, to work with aides. Tomorrow's teacher, indeed, will be as unlikely to man singlehandedly an entire classroom as today's doctor is unlikely to man singlehandedly an operating room.<sup>10</sup>

Non-instructional duties vary from monitoring in the halls, playground and cafeteria to clerical, health, social work aides, and classroom house-keeping. There is no general educational requirement for this type of aide. One of the most valuable results of the non-instructional aide program is that it created new careers for many individuals who were on welfare or existing on minimum finances. Leadership, maturity, and other human qualities are crucial attributes in this area, because often the non-instructional aide is the chief communicator between parent and school or student and teacher.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Branen, Karen, "Teacher Aide," XLIII, No. 9, (September, 1968), 44.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Bank Street College of Education, 7.

The teacher aide is an individual who is indigeneous to the area, speaks the same language, and understands the hierarchy of motivation necessary to inspire the students. In several schools, cross-age helpers are employed as tutors for either younger or slower students.<sup>12</sup>

In today's sophisticated society, the cross-age helpers at the junior and senior levels gain valuable experience in performing service, a deeper insight into the subject matter, and contribute an invaluable service to the teaching staff.<sup>13</sup>

New Jersey initiated an interesting program in adult education which incorporated the best of both non-instructional and instructional duties which best related to the needs and interests of the community. Under the federal community action program (CAP), residents of indigent communities were screened on the basis of demonstrated leadership ability and trained by Rutgers University and two private educational organizations to become course instructors. Prior to involvement in the program the trainees were chronically unemployed and underemployed. They were required to manifest an ability to read, communicate, and be involved in community activities. The program was successful in that it reached the people in the community, (some classes had standing room only), and that it provided a new lease on life for many of the teacher aides who later joined the local school system,

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<sup>12</sup> Lippitt, Ronald and Peggy, "Cross-Age Helpers," NEA Journal, LVII, No. 3 (March, 1968), 24.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

community action agencies, and local industries as employees.

The New Jersey effort has proven that the need for non-professionals in this area is significant, particularly as the number of programs increase and as they try to reach more people in economically deprived neighborhoods.<sup>14</sup>

Although the duties of the teacher aide cover a wide range, they can be classified as instructional or non-instructional. In the majority of the school systems the duties of the teacher aide seem to be commensurate with the amount of formal education; however, it must be noted that each system must analyze their goals and objectives carefully and select the auxiliary personnel that will best assist in creating an excellent educational environment.

The life of our teacher aide is an exciting, complicated, technological life. The hours, days, and weeks seem to disappear with personal involvement. This involvement provides the basic philosophy for adding the paraprofessional to the educational team.<sup>15</sup>

#### Administration

An effective teacher aide program requires the full attention of an administrator. The administrator will be the liaison between the teacher

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<sup>14</sup>The Staff of the New Jersey Community Action Training Institute, "The Poor Bring Adult Education to the Ghetto," Adult Leadership, XLII, (March, 1968), 24.

<sup>15</sup>Devita, Joseph, "A Day In the Life of a Teacher Aide," AV Instruction, Vol. XIII, (May, 1963), 502.

aide and the professional school staff. He will identify specific duties to be performed by the aides, coordinate an orientation program for the aides and provide an in-service course for the teachers in accepting and utilizing a teacher aide. He will be in charge of assignments, scheduling, and teacher-teacher aide employee relations. All teacher aide records, complaints, and suggestions will be referred to him. A well organized program will insure success. One school system placed the classroom teacher in charge of the teacher aide. "Teachers were given a guide developed by teachers and administrators which aided in the effective use of auxiliary personnel."<sup>16</sup>

Some schools have not developed a rationale and structure of operation; therefore misunderstandings and a resistance to the teacher aide program has developed. It must be recognized that a teacher aide has been invited to join the school personnel; therefore he should be welcomed and permitted to work in a clearly defined and secure environment.

#### Effect of the Teacher Aide Program on School Achievement

Many of the teacher aide programs are in an embryonic stage of development. Much of the data has not been analyzed nor recorded on the

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<sup>16</sup>Twist, Dwight, "Improving Instruction Through More Effective Utilization of Certified Personnel, "Journal of Secondary Education, Vol. LVIII, No. 8, (November, 1967), 17.

measurable effect of the teacher aide program on the students' learning; however, several surveys have been made on the teacher aide's opinion of the job and the teacher's opinion of the teacher aide program.

Most teachers liked the idea of having teacher aides assist them with some of their non-instructional duties.<sup>17</sup>

It has been found that systems which have a teacher aide program can recruit more easily and keep teachers in their system.<sup>18</sup>

One of the most vital effects of the teacher aide program is that it can --

make real the kind of individualized instruction about which educators dream and talk. Auxiliary personnel can help to make teaching a profession in reality rather than a slogan, because the teacher will, in fact, have time to think, read, plan, talk to colleagues, diagnose, and prescribe.<sup>19</sup>

The negative effects of a teacher aide program occur only where there is inadequate planning, supervision, and preparation of the staff to receive the new program. Analyzing current data, one could summarize the effects of the teacher aide program as follows:

1. Greater communication between home and school.

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<sup>17</sup>NEA Research Division, "How the Professional Feels About Teacher Aides, How Teacher Aides Feel About Their Jobs," NEA Journal, LVIII, No. 8 (November, 1967), 17.

<sup>18</sup>Branan, 39.

<sup>19</sup>Editors, "Editorial", National Elementary Principal, Vol. XLVI, No. 46, (May, 1967), 5.

2. Greater involvement of parents in worthwhile activities.
3. Greater enrichment of the curriculum; freeing the teacher for professional tasks.
4. Improvement in learning due to increased pupil interest and attention.<sup>20</sup>

### Summary

The teacher aide program is here to stay. Teachers in increasing numbers have expressed enthusiasm about the valuable contribution made by the teacher aide to education. Teacher aides expressed an interest in providing a service to the school and participating in the stride towards quality education. Administrators have indicated their support.

Several colleges and universities have incorporated the teacher aide program as part of their teacher-training curriculum; thus providing a vast resource for auxiliary personnel. The federal government has provided funds as an incentive to schools in poverty areas. Local volunteer groups have recognized the need and have offered their assistance to the schools. Creative, individualized teaching is now a reality to all schools which recognize the need and take the necessary steps to meet the educational needs of the students they serve.

Schools from Maine to California and from Washington to Florida are using auxiliary personnel at both semi-profes-

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<sup>20</sup>Boudreau, 152.

sional and clerical levels to relieve experienced classroom teachers of some of their routine duties while keeping all such activities under the coordination and direction of senior teachers.<sup>21</sup>

The literature has indicated an overwhelming support of a teacher aide program in all schools; but it must be emphasized that an effective program must be administered by an individual who is responsible for the training, supervision, and counselling of the teacher aides.

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<sup>21</sup>Denemark, 17.

## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURE

#### Introductory and General Procedure

The questionnaire was designed to examine the teacher aide programs at the secondary level, as they now exist with the view to laying the basis for a teacher aide program in a specific situation. Questions were included concerning the general characteristics of the school systems, sources of funds, recruitment and training programs, educational background of the teacher aides, general classification of duties, type of employment and salary scale and the general design of program evaluation. The questionnaire was sent to the twenty cities with the highest population in the United States as recorded in the World Atlas.<sup>1</sup>

#### Construction of the Questionnaire

Nineteen questions concerning the general background of the school system and specific data explaining the type of teacher aide program were included in the four-page questionnaire. The questions were short, requiring only a check mark. Space was provided for comments and additions to the short answers. Respondents were invited to enclose a copy of their brochure or written description. Most of the questions were subdivided into

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<sup>1</sup> McNally, Rand, World Atlas (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1956), pp. 194, 195.



several classifications which often required an overlapping of responses . Those systems without a secondary teacher aide program were excluded from the respondent population .

#### Collection of the Data

A questionnaire and cover letter were sent to the superintendent of the public schools in the twenty major cities with the largest population in the United States . Two school systems did not respond . Of the eighteen respondents , only ten reported having teacher aide programs at the secondary level . Eight of the school systems reported having elementary programs only . One of the ten school systems included in the respondent population had discontinued the program after the 1967 school year due to a lack of funds . In four cases , the curriculum supervisor served as respondent after being contacted by the local superintendent . In one instance , both the curriculum supervisor and the reading supervisor responded , the responses of the reading supervisor was used since his responses were more complete and supplemented with details .

#### Treatment of the Data

All of the responding school systems answered one or more items in a question , or omitted items which were not applicable ; thereby causing some of the percentages to total more or less than ten . Each item checked on the questionnaire was tallied and converted to percentages based upon the ten responding . Where an item was explained in a brochure or an

appended report, the writer read the explanation and checked the appropriate item listed on the questionnaire. A summary of the responses are located in the following text and tables.

## CHAPTER IV

### DATA CONCERNING THE TEACHER AIDE PROGRAMS, AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL, AS REPORTED BY ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL IN THE TEN RESPONDING CITIES

#### Introduction

The purpose of this research paper was to study the teacher aide programs, as they now exist, at the secondary level in the twenty cities with the highest population. Ten out of the eighteen responding reported having teacher aides at the secondary level. A summary of the ten administrators' responses to the questionnaires is presented in this Chapter.

#### General Characteristics of The School Systems Utilizing Teacher Aides

Table 1 illustrates the general characteristics of the school systems. The general characteristics are: the location of the schools, the size of the student body, the school population, type of school and the proportion of teacher aides to professional staff.

#### Location of the Schools

Eighty per cent of the school systems used teacher aides in the poverty areas. Two school systems used the teacher aides throughout their entire systems. Teacher aides were employed in fringe areas in forty per cent of the cities; however, only one school system employed teacher aides in the middle class area. The frequent use of teacher aides in the poverty

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEMS  
USING TEACHER AIDES

<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Location of Schools		
Poverty areas . . . . .	8	80%
Fringe areas . . . . .	4	40%
Middle Class areas . . . . .	1	10%
Entire System . . . . .	2	20%
Size of Student Body		
100-500 . . . . .	0	0%
600-1,000 . . . . .	2	20%
1,100 and above . . . . .	10	100%
School Population		
Coeducational . . . . .	10	100%
All Boys . . . . .	0	0
All Girls . . . . .	0	0
Type of Schools		
Junior High (7,8,9) . . . . .	5	50%
Senior High . . . . .	5	50%
Combined Junior-Senior High . . . . .	3	30%
All Three Types . . . . .	3	30%
*Other -- Elementary Only . . . . .	8	38%
Proportion of Teacher Aides to Professional Staff		
1:1 . . . . .	0	0
2:1 . . . . .	2	20%
3:1 . . . . .	1	10%
Other . . . . .	7	70%

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\*Percentage based upon the total eighteen cities responding. All other percentages in this paper are based upon the ten secondary school systems responding.

areas may be due to the complex problems, such as overcrowded classrooms, personnel shortages, and the recent federal categorical financial aid to education. It would seem, however, that teacher aides could effectively enhance the educational experience of the middle class and upper class areas also.

#### Size of the Student Body, Type of School Population and Type of School

All of the school systems reported utilizing teacher aides in schools with a population of 1,100 or above. Two systems used teacher aides in schools of 600-1,000 as well as the larger schools. The student body in the school systems reporting were coeducational. Both junior and senior high programs were reported in the questionnaire.

#### Proportion of Teacher Aides to Professional Staff

One of the most important components of the teacher aide program is the number of auxiliary personnel available to the teacher. Twenty per cent of the school systems reported a ratio of two-to-one. One reported a ratio of three-to-one. The majority of the cities reported various combinations from one and six-tenths-to-one to twenty-to-one. The latter ratio indicates the total assigned to the entire building. Whether the teacher aide was assigned to a specific teacher, department or to the entire school did not seem to be significant as long as the teaching team was able to function more efficiently and effectively as a result of the assistance from the auxiliary personnel.

Sources of Funds

Information concerning sources of funds is given in Table 2.

TABLE 2  
SOURCES OF FUNDS

Sources	Responses	
	Frequency	Percentages
Local School	2	20%
State Government	0	0
Federal Government	5	50%
Combination of the Above	3	30%

Fifty per cent of the cities derived their funds from the federal government's Elementary-Secondary Education Act. The remainder of the schools obtained their funds from either local school resources or a combination of the local school and federal government. It was interesting to note that none of the schools reported receiving funds from their local industries, private endowments or state governments. Recently, the State of Wisconsin has funded the Milwaukee schools; thereby allowing for the employment of teacher aides in the Milwaukee schools. One responding school is no longer federally funded and as a result had discontinued the teacher aide program. It seems that neither local industry nor state funds were obtained to continue the program.

Types of Programs

Data in Table 3 show the types of programs reported by the school system.

TABLE 3  
TYPES OF PROGRAMS

<u>Programs</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Plan for reading improvement		
Yes . . . . .	9	90%
No . . . . .	1	10%
All school reading program in the content areas . . . . .	3	30%
Remedial reading program . . . . .	8	80%
Individual . . . . .	4	40%
Groups . . . . .	4	40%
2-4 . . . . .	1	10%
5-10 . . . . .	2	20%
10-15 . . . . .	4	40%
More than 15 . . . . .	1	10%
Developmental reading program. . . . .	5	50%
Individual . . . . .	2	20%
Groups . . . . .	3	30%
2-4 . . . . .	0	0
5-10 . . . . .	0	0
10-15 . . . . .	2	20%
More than 15 . . . . .	3	30%
In which programs are teacher aides employed:		
Remedial individual . . . . .	6	60%
Remedial groups . . . . .	9	90%
Developmental individual . . . . .	2	20%
Developmental group . . . . .	3	30%

In response to the question concerning plans of secondary school personnel for a reading improvement program, one system stated that it had no particular plan for reading improvement at the secondary level. The other nine respondents reported having either a remedial group program involving: two-to-four students, five-to-ten students, or ten-to-fifteen students; or both remedial and developmental programs. The developmental group programs served ten-to-fifteen students or more than thirty students. Teacher aides were employed in both programs.

#### Recruitment and Training Programs

##### Recruitment

Table 4 illustrates the resources used for the recruitment of the teacher aides.

TABLE 4

#### RECRUITMENT

Sources	Responses	
	Frequency	Percentage
Neighborhood	4	40%
State Employment Office	1	10%
School Board	6	60%
Parent Teacher Association	3	30%
Other	3	30%



The majority of cities reported having recruited their auxiliary personnel from the local school board, Parent Teacher Association and the local colleges and universities. Forty per cent recruited their teacher aides from the neighborhood. As the New Jersey program illustrated, it seems that the neighborhood recruitment plan may be the more effective in the poverty areas where there often exists a communication gap between the school and the community. Often the Parent Teacher Association groups, another source of personnel, is defunct in this area.<sup>1</sup>

### Training

Data in Table 5 indicates the responses concerning training programs and the administration of the training programs in the responding school systems. Repetitions are included.

Seventy per cent of the cities held a workshop pre-training session. The sessions were held weekly for two-to-three weeks. Twenty per cent held workshop sessions more than six weeks. Only one school system held daily sessions. Thirty per cent had a concentrated or package pre-service course of one day.

Twenty per cent of the cities had semester in-service training programs and twenty per cent held their in-service sessions weekly. Thirty

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<sup>1</sup> Staff of the New Jersey Community Action Training Institute, loc. cit., 327.

TABLE 5

## FREQUENCY OF VARIOUS TYPES OF TRAINING AMONG TEACHER AIDES

<u>Type</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Pre-Training . . . . .	7	70%
2 to 3 weeks . . . . .	1	10%
4 to 6 weeks . . . . .	0	0
More than 6 weeks . . . . .	3	30%
Sessions		
Daily . . . . .	1	10%
2 to 3 per week . . . . .	2	20%
One session per week . . . . .	4	40%
Concentrated Package . . . . .	5	50%
1 day . . . . .	3	30%
2 or 3 days . . . . .	0	0
One week . . . . .	1	10%
More than one week . . . . .	1	10%
In-Service Training . . . . .	4	40%
Semester courses . . . . .	2	20%
Weekly seminars . . . . .	2	20%
Administration of the Program		
Local college or university . . . . .	3	30%
Local school board . . . . .	6	60%
Volunteer professional teachers . . . . .	0	0
Other . . . . .	6	60%

---

\* Where respondents indicated a combination of one or more categories, the overlap was included in the totals.

per cent of the school systems held orientation programs for the aides and in-service training for the teachers; to orientate the teachers as to the most effective use of the teacher aides. Many of the responses were repetitive.

#### Administration of the Training Program

In sixty per cent of the reporting school systems, the local school board administered the training program. Thirty per cent utilized the local college or university. Sixty per cent also used various other personnel, such as central office staff or school staff. There was overlapping and repetition in this area. Several school systems used both the school board and college personnel or a combination of all three resources.

#### Background of the Teacher Aide

##### Social-psychological

Many of the school systems initiated the teacher aide program as a type of new career opportunity. The auxiliary personnel, therefore, is often indigenous to the school community which is most often located in a poverty area. Generally, the teacher aide must be mentally and physically healthy, mature, sincerely interested in working with children, reliable and flexible. Three systems preferred prior training and experience with youth or group work either as a volunteer or an employee of a church, neighborhood group, community center or scout group. Some of the schools

sought individuals who demonstrated leadership qualities in their communities and who seemed to be a good communicator.

### Educational

The educational backgrounds of the teacher aides in the responding school systems are summarized in Table 6.

TABLE 6  
EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND  
OF TEACHER AIDES

Education	Responses	
	Frequency	Percentage
Below high school	1	10%
High school diploma	5	50%
One or two years college	2	20%
College intern	1	10%
College degree	1	10%
All of above	1	10%

Educational requirements of teacher aides ran the gamut from one school system which did not require a high school diploma or the equivalent to one other school system which required a college degree. It must be noted that most of the systems had a graded scale of duties under the general title of auxiliary personnel. The more formal education the individ-

ual had, the more instructional type duties he would perform. The school system which required a college degree utilized the teacher aide position as a type of practicum for future teachers, under the direction of a supervisory teacher.

General Classification of Duties, Type of Employment and  
Salary Scale

Duties

Responses of the school systems concerning the general classification of teacher aides duties are shown in Table 7.

TABLE 7

GENERAL CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHER AIDE DUTIES

Type of Duty	Responses	
	Frequency	Percentage
Instructional	7	70%
Non-instructional	8	80%

\* Some school systems responded to both items.

The duties of the teacher aides can be classified as instructional or non-instructional. Instructional duties involve some type of tutorial work with small groups of remedial students or a one-to-one type experience; storytelling; recording of students' narrated experiences; setting up equip-

ment and experiments; grading papers, preparing displays and bulletin boards; room librarian; room clerk and any other duties assigned by the teaching staff. Non-instructional duties usually involve: hall monitoring; cafeteria duty; playground or building-grounds attendant; gymnasium equipment manager; field trip chaperone; social worker aide; nurse, librarian, office or administrative aide; and other areas of general assistance. General clerical duties, such as duplicating, filing or cataloging may be listed as non-instructional duties.

#### Type of Employee

A question of concern was the payment of teacher aides. The data distinguishing between volunteer and employee are given in Table 8.

TABLE 8

#### TYPE OF EMPLOYEE

Employee	Responses	
	Frequency	Percentage
Volunteer service	1	10%
Paid employee	4	40%
Combination of volunteer service and paid employee	5	50%

Sixty per cent of the responding school systems used both volunteer and paid teacher aides. Forty per cent used only paid teacher aides and one school system used only volunteers. Further study of the volunteer programs may contribute some valuable information for cities where the teacher aide programs must be discontinued or minimized because of lack of funds. In a study of the teacher aide programs in a private school system, it is interesting to note that the majority of the teacher aides employed were volunteers who appeared at the school and volunteered their time.<sup>2</sup> In contrast, the public school systems in this survey were required to recruit and hire a majority of their teacher aides. To be effective, a volunteer program requires the full time and attention of a staff member and a concentrated course in the techniques of tutoring reading. A slight variation of the above was recommended in the above mentioned study.<sup>3</sup>

### Salary Scale

The salary scale reported by the responding school systems is shown in Table 9.

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<sup>2</sup> Folk, Marlene Janet, "An Evaluative Study of Lay Aides In A Mid-Western Private School System," (A masters dissertation, Cardinal Stritch College, 1968), 76, 78.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 123, 124.

TABLE 9

## SALARY SCALE FOR TEACHER AIDES

Salary	Responses	
	Frequency	Percentage
Hourly Wage	9	90%
\$1.50 - \$2.49	5	50%
\$2.50 - \$2.99	4	40%
\$3.00 - \$3.49	0	0
\$3.50 and above	0	0
Annual Salary	4	40%
\$3,000 - \$3,999	3	30%
\$4,000 - \$4,999	1	10%
\$5,000 - \$5,999	0	0
\$6,000 and above	0	0

Only one responding school system used volunteers exclusively. Ninety per cent of the school systems employed paid teacher aides. The salary scale ranged from a low of \$1.38 per hour to a high of \$2.50<sup>+</sup> per hour. Salaries were commensurate with the educational background and the type of duties performed.

Evaluation of The Teacher Aide Program

The responses concerning the evaluation of the teacher aide program are shown in Table 10.



TABLE 10

## MODE AND METHOD OF EVALUATING THE TEACHER AIDE PROGRAMS

Mode and Method of Evaluation	Responses	
	Frequency	Percentage
Teacher evaluation	7	70%
Administrative evaluation	7	70%
Test Scores evaluation	0	0
Combination of above	2	20%
Others	2	20%
The above percentages include duplications.		

All of the responding school systems had some form of evaluation.

Many evaluation techniques seemed to be loose and inadequate; others were well structured and seemed to contribute to the overall effectiveness of the program. Often a school system reported using a combination of modes and methods in evaluating their programs. Seventy per cent were evaluated by central school board officials or local school administrators. One of the school systems used student evaluations. Another respondent used teacher aide evaluations.

An informal type survey seemed to be preferable to a formal standardized test. None of the respondents reported using formal tests. Many of the characteristics which seemed to be valuable to the program could be assessed more effectively in an informal type instrument.

### Summary

The response from the questionnaire seems to indicate that large, urban schools have recognized the need and have taken the necessary steps to initiate a teacher aide program at the secondary level. One factor which gave impetus to the present surge in teacher aide programs is the federal government's financial assistance for auxiliary personnel under the Elementary-Secondary Education Act. Although a small percentage of the school systems receive funds from the local school board, the majority rely upon the federal government funds.

Recruitment of auxiliary personnel varies from the general staff in that many of the schools recruit from their surrounding community. This procedure is especially true in the urban poverty areas where there seems to exist a communication barrier between the school and the community. All of the respondents provide either pre-training or in-service training or both for teacher aides and teachers. Several of the training programs are loosely structured; however, the machinery seems to be firmly in motion.

Teacher aides seemed to come from a broad educational background. The importance of formal education rises in proportion to the type of duties performed. A majority of the respondents require high school training or its equivalent as a minimum requirement. Several respondents rated personal attributes such as leadership ability, sincerity, communication skills,

reliability and maturity as the most valuable assets for their programs. Colleges and universities seem to recognize the vast potential in incorporating teacher aide practicum as part of their teacher-training program. Several school systems have utilized the teacher aide program as an incentive to attract new teachers to their schools.

All teacher aide duties can be classified as instructional or non-instructional. The instructional duties approach the professional; therefore, a college degree or at least two years of college training is required. The instructional aide also receives the highest salary in the teacher aide salary scale. Non-instructional duties require sound judgment, empathy, flexibility, and keen insight into the educational philosophy of the school. No specific guidelines of formal education have been developed for the non-instructional aide.

Many programs have gathered all the ingredients of success but falter or fail completely; due to poor planning or inadequate evaluation procedure. In order to operate effectively, there must be a plan in operation and the entire organization must work the plan. Those school systems which have carefully planned their teacher aide program and have built in a design of evaluation have experienced overwhelming success. The brochures and comments forwarded with the questionnaire seem to attest to the fact that teacher aides are vital to an effective secondary program.

## CHAPTER V

### RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The results of the questionnaire has indicated that while some school systems have initiated a teacher aide program in their secondary schools; a large number continue to limit the service to the elementary grades. Individualized instruction does not cease at the door of the secondary school. It is at the secondary level where the need for innovative methods and creative teaching must be revived. The drop out rate of our secondary students is astounding. There is no longer a period of grace. All available personnel, devices, motivating skills and concerted effort must be directed towards motivating our youth to stay in school.

Emphasis seems to be placed on teacher aide programs in the poverty areas. More teacher aide programs should be incorporated throughout all school systems. Many of the suburban areas benefit from the volunteer services of parents and interested community leaders. These volunteers should be trained and coordinated into an effective member of the educational team. One of the most interesting findings was the seeming involvement of the school in the community through its teacher aide program. Education is a two-way street. It has no boundaries. The community can learn from the school and the school can learn from the community.

It seems that the responses indicated that more study, coordination and planning is needed in providing a worthwhile training program for teachers and teacher aides. Perhaps local colleges and universities could offer credit courses to teacher aides as an incentive to upgrade their status. Two respondents reported such programs. Everyone benefits - the teacher aide gains a new career and economic security, the school gains in trained personnel, the university gains in its quest for better methods of training teachers. Joint seminars and informal staff discussions could further the spirit of unity and understanding between professional and auxiliary personnel.

Two factors emerge as the keys to an effective teacher aide program at the secondary level: (1) there must be a staff member in charge of the program who can personally guide its course; and (2) continuous evaluation must be built into the program, in order to test and shift, if necessary, to more effective positions.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

Further research in the following areas would greatly benefit the future of effective teacher aide programs at the secondary level:

1. An item analysis of the various teacher aide duties  
and their effect in the total educational environment.

2. An attitudinal study of the student body where teacher aides are employed.
  - a. Towards the teacher aide
  - b. Towards the teacher.
  - c. Towards the courses or school.
3. A nationwide sampling of teacher aide programs at the secondary level.
4. The effect of teacher aide experience in motivating a non-instructional aide to become an instructional aide, and, finally, a teacher.
5. A community survey of the effect of the teacher aide program on the school and the community.

### Summary

The teacher aide program is one of the most valuable contributions to education because it affords the teacher the opportunity to teach, create and individually reach the students. Planning, administration and continuous evaluation will elevate the teacher aide to his rightful position - a teammate striding towards the goal of quality education. The door has been opened; it now remains for the school staff to welcome their new teammate.

## APPENDIX

Mrs. Mildred L. Harpole  
4242 North 19th Place  
Milwaukee, Wis. 53209  
March 22, 1968

Presently, there is much consideration about Teacher Aide Programs. This, of course, is one of the newer ventures and deserves special study and pooling of information already learned from experience if this type of program is to be successful. As educators, there is a real interest in any program which will help educators do a more efficient service.

Consequently, I am trying to bring together the experiences of those who have already started on Teacher Aide Programs in reading in the secondary schools in the major twenty cities. I am doing this project as a research study under the direction of the Cardinal Stritch College as part of my work toward a master's degree. This was selected because of the great need felt by many educators in establishing aide programs. The Milwaukee School System is considering a Teacher Aide Program. Surely, you will want to share your experiences. I shall be happy to send you a summary of the findings so that they will, in turn, be of service to you.

Enclosed is a questionnaire which can be answered in a short time. It has been made with the busy executive in mind. Your cooperation in this collection of the most important aspect of a Teacher Aide program will be greatly appreciated.

I am also enclosing a slip on which you can state whether or not you desire to receive a summary. This need not be sent with the questionnaire; if you prefer to remain anonymous.

Sincerely yours,

Mildred L. Harpole

Enclosure: Questionnaire  
Request for Summary



QUESTIONNAIRE ON TEACHER AIDE READING PROGRAMS IN  
THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE TWENTY  
MAJOR CITIES

Please check ( ) the correct response:

Background

Questionnaire being answered by \_\_\_\_\_  
(State position in school system)

Location of schools utilizing Teacher Aides:

\_\_\_\_\_ Poverty area    \_\_\_\_\_ Fringe area    \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Class area    \_\_\_\_\_ Entire System

Size of Student Body:

\_\_\_\_\_ 100-500    \_\_\_\_\_ 600-1000    \_\_\_\_\_ 1100 and above

School Population:

\_\_\_\_\_ Coeducational    \_\_\_\_\_ All boys    \_\_\_\_\_ All girls

Type of schools:

\_\_\_\_\_ Junior High (grades 7, 8, 9)    \_\_\_\_\_ Senior High

\_\_\_\_\_ Combined Junior-Senior High    \_\_\_\_\_ All three types

\_\_\_\_\_ Other. Explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Proportion of Teacher Aides to Professional Staff:

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 to 1    \_\_\_\_\_ 2 to 1    \_\_\_\_\_ 3 to 1    \_\_\_\_\_ Indicate Others

Sources of funds:

\_\_\_\_\_ Local School Funds    \_\_\_\_\_ State Funds    \_\_\_\_\_ Federal Funds

\_\_\_\_\_ Combination. Explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Private endowment    \_\_\_\_\_ Local industry

## TEACHER AIDE READING PROGRAM

Does your secondary schools have any particular plan for reading improvement?

\_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no

If yes, please check the type or types of programs which you have:

\_\_\_\_\_All school reading program in the content areas

\_\_\_\_\_Remedial

\_\_\_\_\_Individual

\_\_\_\_\_Groups

\_\_\_\_\_2-4

\_\_\_\_\_5-10

\_\_\_\_\_10-15

\_\_\_\_\_more than 15

\_\_\_\_\_Developmental (speed, study skills, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_Individual

\_\_\_\_\_Groups

\_\_\_\_\_2-4

\_\_\_\_\_5-10

\_\_\_\_\_10-15

\_\_\_\_\_more than 15

In which programs are Teacher Aides employed:

\_\_\_\_\_Remedial individual

\_\_\_\_\_Remedial group

\_\_\_\_\_Developmental individual

\_\_\_\_\_Developmental group

Type of Teacher Aides employed:

\_\_\_\_\_volunteer

\_\_\_\_\_paid

\_\_\_\_\_both

How are the Teacher Aides recruited:

\_\_\_\_\_neighborhood

\_\_\_\_\_State Employment Office

\_\_\_\_\_School Board

\_\_\_\_\_PTA

\_\_\_\_\_Other. Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Social-psychological criteria used: Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Educational background:

\_\_\_\_\_below high school graduation \_\_\_\_\_high school diploma

\_\_\_\_\_1 or 2 years college \_\_\_\_\_college intern \_\_\_\_\_college degree

Duties of the Teacher Aides:

\_\_\_\_\_teaching duties. Describe:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_non-teaching duties. Describe:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Aide training program:

Pre-training

\_\_\_\_\_workshop

\_\_\_\_\_2-3 weeks

\_\_\_\_\_4-6 weeks

\_\_\_\_\_more than 6 weeks

Are the sessions:

\_\_\_\_\_daily \_\_\_\_\_2 or 3 per week \_\_\_\_\_one session per week

\_\_\_\_\_concentrated or packaged course

\_\_\_\_\_one day

\_\_\_\_\_2 or 3 days

\_\_\_\_\_one week

\_\_\_\_\_more than one week

In-service training

\_\_\_\_\_semester courses

\_\_\_\_\_weekly seminars

Who administers the training program:

\_\_\_\_\_local college or university

\_\_\_\_\_local school board.

\_\_\_\_\_volunteer professional teachers

\_\_\_\_\_other. Explain:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Salary scale:

\_\_\_\_\_ hourly wage

\_\_\_\_\_ \$1.50 - \$2.49

\_\_\_\_\_ \$2.50 - \$2.99

\_\_\_\_\_ \$3.00 - \$3.49

\_\_\_\_\_ \$3.50 - or above

\_\_\_\_\_ annual salary

\_\_\_\_\_ \$3,000 - \$3,999

\_\_\_\_\_ \$4,000 - \$4,999

\_\_\_\_\_ \$5,000 - \$5,999

\_\_\_\_\_ \$6,000 or above

Evaluation of program:

\_\_\_\_\_ teachers

\_\_\_\_\_ administration

\_\_\_\_\_ test scores

\_\_\_\_\_ all of above

\_\_\_\_\_ other. Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you have a brochure or written description of your Teacher Aide Reading Program in the secondary schools, a copy will be greatly appreciated.

REQUEST FOR SUMMARY

If you would like to receive a summary of these findings, please sign this slip and return it to me either in a separate envelope or with the questionnaire.

I am interested in the summary of the study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(City)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Zip Code)

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